

## The writings of David Crosley and Baptist identity in the eighteenth century<sup>1</sup>

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  - *This article examines the writings of the northern minister David Crosley. An itinerant preacher active in Yorkshire and Lancashire before being called to the pastorate of the Cripplegate congregation in London, Crosley is often considered, with his cousin William Mitchell, to have been the principal disseminator of Baptist principles in northern England, in the post-Toleration years. And yet his excommunication from Cripplegate on the charges of excessive drinking, adultery and lying ensured that his name remained tainted with suspicions of Antinomianism. This article provides the first attempt to reassess Crosley's life and career by taking into account his printed work as well as his manuscript correspondence and tracts. It will argue that far from being an Antinomian, Crosley was not only an orthodox Calvinist concerned with Church order but also a reluctant controversialist seeking to promote dissenting interest, godliness and discipline away from the sectarian partisanship that tore apart the early eighteenth-century Churches.*
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### David Crosley and his writings

David Crosley is the stuff of legend. Allegedly a friend of John Bunyan, a lewd liver, a drunkard and an adulterer, his private life was scrutinised more intensely than that of most ministers of his generation. For his contemporaries, he was either 'notoriously scandalous' or an 'Honoured and beloved Brother' whose loving pastoral epistles lifted more than one believer out of the jaws of despair.<sup>2</sup> Later commentators hesitated between considering him as either 'a remarkable man...of brilliant intellectual parts', whose name was 'rich with many blessed memories', or as 'a very erratic individual', 'temperamentally weak', a 'practical Antinomian'.<sup>3</sup>

Born at the Restoration on the border of Yorkshire and Lancashire, during the persecution of dissenters, David Crosley experienced conversion at the age of twelve and, a few years later (some time between 1685 and 1687), began assisting his elder cousin William Mitchell who preached across the counties in a 'loosely-organised circuit...of preaching stations'.<sup>4</sup> In 1692, Crosley sought Presbyterian ordination while at the same time securing a place of worship in Bacup with Mitchell and being re-baptised by John Eckells in Bromsgrove (Worcestershire). Soon afterwards, Bromsgrove gave him a letter of recommendation, with an open address to Baptist Churches, to 'Preach the gospell and Baptise wheresoeuer the Prouidence of God shall open a: door to his ministry'. Although duly justified 'by vertue of Authority giuen vnto vs by our Lord Iesus Chris', Bromsgrove's recommendation was regarded by some as a breach of 'orderly' procedure.<sup>5</sup>

Not unlike John Bunyan a generation earlier, whose works he almost certainly knew, and who had been converted by 'poor women' in Bedford, Crosley credited his adoption of Baptist views to the 'one woman of any accompt' whom he had met by chance on one of his preaching

tours.<sup>6</sup> In the West Midlands Crosley had encountered men and women whose lives and ecclesiastical government he considered to be vastly superior to that of their northern counterparts:

I have found better Orders, more godly sincerity, Saints Community, and Christian Love, than with most of you, by a great deal, for all ye: Members of ye: Baptized Churches call one another by ye: Name of Brothers & sisters, & indeed, most of them live accordingly; Oh yt it was so with you! Nay, when I see these things to be in them & abound, it cuts me to ye: heart to consider how far we are from these things.<sup>7</sup>

While Crosley's conversion owed much to Mitchell's preaching, Crosley's adoption of Baptist views led in turn to Mitchell being re-baptised even though a few years earlier he had written to his friend John Moore, who had lent him a book on adult baptism: 'I give you thanks for you[r] kindness in lending it me, but not for any good yt either I or others can reap by any thing in it, except we could gather grapes of thorns; & figs of thistles'.<sup>8</sup> On 18th September 1696, thanks to a letter addressed to one Mary Thompson, we know that Mitchell had been rebaptised and was also practising baptism himself, for he mounts a careful Scriptural defence of his principles.<sup>9</sup> Both Crosley and Mitchell, however, were to face considerable opposition from their listeners, leading to Mitchell's dismissal in 1699, and it would take decades for the Churches to adopt Baptist principles.

In February 1696, among much opposition, Crosley became 'Teaching Elder' of Tottlebank, in the Furness Fells (Cumbria), a position offered to Mitchell a couple of years earlier.<sup>10</sup>

Memorand[um]

That in or about the third Month called May. 1695

Att a Church meetinge att Totlbanke

After praier, the whole church gave a Call to M<sup>r</sup> David Crosley desiringe him to take the Oversight of them as ther Officer.

The 27<sup>th</sup> of February followinge M<sup>r</sup> David Crosley gave vp himselfe as a member to this church of C<sup>x</sup>. And was then sett apart as Teaching Elder to the church.<sup>11</sup>

Tottlebank had been gathered in 1669 in the presence of the Congregationalist minister of nearby Cockermouth, George Larkham, and could be considered either Congregational or open-communion Baptist, as it allowed both baptised and non-baptised believers at the communion table. In 1703, the Church let Crosley depart to London to minister to the large congregation of the late Hanserd Knollys, known after its eighteenth-century location as Cripplegate. Six years later, Cripplegate excommunicated Crosley on three main charges: 'drunkenness', 'immodest behavior towards women, bordering on the breach of the 7th Commandment' and 'Lying' after protracted proceedings that threatened to split the congregation and endanger the Baptist community nationally.<sup>12</sup> Crosley promptly returned to Tottlebank, although he could not resume his pastorate before being restored and properly dismissed by Cripplegate, to which the latter never consented on the grounds that Crosley had never exhibited proper repentance. Crosley's post-London career is more shadowy. Rumours of scandal were still rife by 1736, when William Marshall accused Crosley of poaching members from other ministers.<sup>13</sup> He finally settled in Goodshaw and became a school teacher, still preaching to a supposed congregation of 4,000 in 1743, a year before his death.

Crosley has attracted the attention of Church historians interested in his role in the evangelisation of the northern counties and the gathering of Baptist Churches. Most of the secondary material from which this short survey of Crosley's career has been drawn is either historical or biographical, concerned with his organisation of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Churches around the forest of Rossendale.<sup>14</sup> What is still missing is an examination of Crosley's

own writings and an appraisal of the way he himself considered his ministry. In doing so, it will be necessary to pay attention to a body of neglected texts and to replace Crosley not only in the ecclesiastical but also in the literary culture of post-Toleration dissent to which he firmly belonged.

David Crosley was not a productive writer by the standards of some of his eighteenth-century colleagues, but he did experiment with various genres, ranging from letters of consolation or exhortation to elegies and pastoral counsel. We have two sermons from the extremes of his career. The first, *Samson a Type of Christ*, was preached before the London congregation of the Presbyterian Samuel Pomfret in 1691, reedited with additions in 1744 and reprinted in 1796; the second was preached on the occasion of the execution for murder of a Lancashire gentleman, Lawrence Britcliffe, in 1744. Crosley also ventured into pastoral territory, composing a small treatise on marriage that he appended to the 1744 edition of *Samson*, and *Plain and Honest Directions, and Christian Counsels*, an addition to a versified dialogue by 'N.T.', *The Old Man's Legacy to his Daughters*, published in 1736. He also wrote the preface to his cousin William Mitchell's *Jachin & Boaz* in 1707 and a few poems. One appears at the beginning of *The Old Man's Legacy*, another, 'short but significant', at the end of *The Christian Marriage Explained*. From early sources, we learn that Crosley was probably the author of *Adam where art thou?*, composed after a bout of illness c.1719, although no copy seems to have survived in catalogued collections. To those printed works, we should add a series of letters preserved in the notebook of his Rossendale friend, John Moore, and in the Church book of the Cripplegate congregation, as well as a short epistolary exchange with George Whitefield. Crosley also composed a 'Christian Exhortation to Church-Fellowship' and a poem on the death of John Moore's elder son, both in Moore's manuscript.<sup>15</sup>

The combination of private and public works, letters, sermons, pastoral advice, prefatory matter, commentaries on Church government and the occasional godly verse is fairly typical for a minister of Crosley's caliber. Yet it reveals that Crosley, whom we normally associate with many a controversy, was careful not to become involved in doctrinal or ecclesiological disputes. Even the most thorough commentators on his life have neglected the manuscript and printed works which clarify this and other aspects of Crosley's career.

### **David Crosley, publicity and print**

David Crosley's first printed sermon, *Samson a Type of Christ* (Judges 14: 5), was preached before Samuel Pomfret's morning lecture in Gravel Lane, on July 22 1691, when the young and yet unknown Crosley was on a preaching tour. This was his first visit to London, although he was not without dissenting acquaintances there, for he first secured Pomfret's invitation and was invited to dine at the house of John Strudwick, a wholesale grocer in Holborn, and a deacon in the Congregational Church of George Cokayne. John Bunyan had died three years earlier in that same house and was interred in Strudwick's tomb in Bunhill Fields. A few months later, Crosley secured an invitation to preach to Bunyan's congregation in Bedford, now ministered to by Ebenezer Chandler. In Strudwick's house, as Bunyan might have done before him, Crosley admired a 'piece of Turkey tapestry hangings' depicting Samson slaying the lion in the Valley of Timnah, that began 'to frame ideas in [his] mind' for his forthcoming sermon.<sup>16</sup> The sermon having been well received by the congregation, Crosley had written a preface to a printed version within a week, at his temporary lodgings in Cheapside.

It would take half a century for Crosley to be more specific about his first foray into print, in the much enlarged preface to the second 1744 edition. *Samson*, by then, had been suitably gentrified. Crosley's name now appeared in full on the title-page, whereas the 1691 edition simply read 'Published at the Request of the Congregation, for Publick good. by D.C. an unworthy servant of Christ'. A suitably superlative preface was written by George Whitefield, with whom Crosley was corresponding, proclaiming that 'Our sentiments as to the essential doctrines of the gospel, exactly harmonize, and our souls, I trust, have drank into the same

spirit.<sup>17</sup> Crosley finally added a commentary on Ephesians 5: 22-33, a parallel between husband and wife and Christ and his Church.<sup>18</sup>

In this 1744 edition, Mr Strudwick ('a gentleman') and 'Mr Bunyan' are both mentioned for the first time, and Crosley expressed the hope that his 'raw and undigested' words would be fit for 'the ears of a popular and polite audience.'<sup>19</sup> Another 'gentleman' was also present, 'a gentleman bookseller' who, after the sermon, addressed the congregation in person and proposed to have the sermon printed at his own cost and distributed freely to those who could not afford it. Helped by some who had taken the sermon in shorthand (for Crosley preached without notes) it came into print 'a few days afterward'. One thousand copies were printed and it sold out within six months. Perhaps this gentleman was William Marshall, whose name appears on the title-page of the sermon. Marshall was best known for publishing John Owen's works (due advertisements appear at the end of Crosley's sermon) and he was at the very same time engaged in the printing, by subscription, of the first folio of John Bunyan's works.

Such a process of gentrification in the course of half a century was by no means unusual but it should alert us to several essential points. Firstly, Crosley had been excommunicated by a London congregation, had been silenced by his northern colleagues and had fallen into disgrace among some of his previous admirers, but by 1744 he was definitely regaining lustre. *The Triumph of Sovereign Grace*, published that year, is the only publication that identifies Crosley on its title-page as a 'minister'. Secondly, Crosley secured respectability by placing his work firmly into Calvinist mainstream, regardless of denominational boundaries. Pomfret was a Presbyterian, Strudwick a Congregationalist, Whitefield a Methodist and Bunyan was increasingly claimed by the Particular Baptists as one of their own, despite his open-communion stance for which he should rather be called Congregationalist.

Thirdly, an examination of these works reveals an acute awareness, on Crosley's part, of the divide between town and country and a reluctance to make public appearances. In 1691 he already knew, having started his itinerant preaching career on the borders of Lancashire and Yorkshire, that '*it cometh to pass that the City is ready to surfeit with Superfluity, while the Countrey is almost starved for want of supply &c.*'<sup>20</sup> All his works are therefore addressed, or show a deep commitment, to small provincial congregations, and Crosley was careful to maintain this stance even when ministering to a large metropolitan congregation.

Crosley mentions, for instance, that he was asked to republish *Samson* 'for the use of the country'.<sup>21</sup> He addressed Mitchell's *Jachin & Boaz* to the 'Friends and Hearers of the Deceas'd Author; Especially those who more constantly attended his Ministry in the West Part of Yorkshire and East of Lancashire'<sup>22</sup> and his own *Christian Councels* to '*his kind and faithful Friends, and Auditors; ordinarily attending upon his Ministry at Baccop, and Coulin Hill*'.<sup>23</sup> The sermon preached in Bacup after the execution of Britcliffe is also grounded in this particular, northern context. Britcliffe was a Lancashire gentleman, known to at least three of Crosley's associates (Henry Winterbottom, Henry Butterworth and Benjamin Heap) who appended their names to a certificate attesting his conversion: 'Next he desired one of us to go to prayer with him and for him, telling him that it was now a long time since they two spent a whole night in prayer together, in the lower barn'.<sup>24</sup> However, Britcliffe, as is sometimes believed, had never joined one of the congregations with which Crosley was associated and indeed Winterbottom, Butterworth and Heap testified in a postscript that that this was one of Britcliffe's biggest regrets at the time of his death, intimating that godly fellowship could have prevented his own descent into debauchery.<sup>25</sup>

If his own account is to be trusted, David Crosley spent most of life 'importuned' by friends who wished him to appear in print against his own better judgement. The word 'importuned' was one that he particularly cherished, for it cast his acquaintances into the role of the importunate—but eventually successful—widow of Luke 18 while allowing Crosley himself to maintain a due sense of decorum and modesty. Such display of unworthiness is a standard feature in prefatory material of the period, but it returns with surprising frequency in Crosley's works. Never once does he fail to mention other people's efforts on his behalf and the cause of

God in printing and disseminating good works: he had to be permanently ‘importuned’, ‘requested’, ‘solicited’, ‘intreated’ and ‘encouraged’.<sup>26</sup> Crosley wished to minimise his own involvement, not only as a worthy, ‘polite’ author, but also as a servant of Christ.

As early as 1691, for instance, he mentioned that *Samson* was ‘*not at all designed for the Press: No nothing less was in the Authors thought*’<sup>27</sup>, a point he reiterates in 1744 by referring to his ‘surprise’, having never supposed ‘any thing of mine could be fit for such a publication’.<sup>28</sup> ‘But the congregation was so unanimous and importunate to have what was proposed go forward, that I could not gainsay it.’<sup>29</sup> Similarly, his friends ‘importun’d [him] to draw up something by Way of Addition’ to *The Old Man’s Legacy*: ‘I had at first, no Inclination thereunto yet only unwilling, because I judged myself unmeet to offer any Thing’ until ‘Importunity overc[a]me my Reluctancy’.<sup>30</sup> As for *The Christian Marriage Explained*, published in 1744 with the new edition of *Samson*, it was in fact composed in 1726 ‘at the request of a Friend’.<sup>31</sup> Finally, a ‘preliminary paper’ destined for Lawrence Britcliffe alone (whom Crosley had no intention of visiting in prison until he was so ‘importune[d]’ by acquaintances that he yielded to their demands<sup>32</sup>) was eventually printed only because it had found a good reception in manuscript, Crosley having waited for the verdict of a restricted circle of friends.<sup>33</sup> On all counts, rightly, wrongly, or disingenuously, he judged himself deeply unworthy. Whether help came from a ‘gentleman bookseller’, a cousin entrusting him with an unpublished manuscript, an entire congregation, or some anonymous friends, Crosley never acknowledged direct responsibility for the wider dissemination of any of his printed works.

The best example of Crosley’s hesitation between seeking public attention for the good of the Gospel and remaining a humble labourer in local vineyards is possibly apocryphal. Since James Hargreaves, whose appendix to *The Life and Memoir of the Late Reverend John Hirst* (1816) is dedicated to Mitchell, Crosley and the Rossendale Churches, historians have included an extended poem in the Crosley canon, *Adam, where art thou?*, copies of which are now difficult to trace. Fortunately, Hargreaves quotes at length from the poem’s prologue. If indeed it is by Crosley, then he clearly modelled his authorial persona on that of John Bunyan. The prologue, partly cast in the form of a dialogue between the reluctant author fearing that his ‘verse is not polite enough’ and his friends, ‘some he loved well’, is strikingly reminiscent of the ‘Apology’ to *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, and Crosley’s anagram reminds one of Bunyan’s own strategy of dissimulation when, in the advertisement to *The Holy War*, he signed himself ‘Nu hony in a B’:

Subscribe your name and quickly send it out  
To visit mortals, Country round about.  
Not so, said I, anonymous, I’ll send it:  
Matter, not author ’tis must recommend it:  
But yet lest any should be at a loss,  
My name’s in anagram, DAILY DUE CROSS.<sup>34</sup>

Bunyan was a natural precedent, not only for the ‘plainness’ of style that the uneducated Crosley advocated, but also for the metaphors of travel that recur throughout his work. It is perhaps no coincidence that Crosley developed an early interest in Samson’s travels to Timnah to fetch a Philistine wife after seeing the tapestry in the house of a Bunyan acquaintance, or that, as Bunyan had done, he described ‘N.T.’’s book as a ‘pilgrim’, orphaned since the death of its author, and in need of a companion—Crosley’s own *Christian Councels*—to roam the wide world.<sup>35</sup>

Anonymously, as ‘D.C’, ‘DAILY DUE CROSS’ or ‘An Admirer of Grace and Truth’, David Crosley shunned authorial and ministerial publicity until his very last work, written when he was 75 years old. Here he presents himself, yet again, as one who is constantly prevailed upon by discerning friends, well-wishers and auditors, without whose encouragement he would never have ventured into print. Hesitating between spreading his godly message to the country and addressing the special needs of a small cluster of Churches in his native area, between

assuming a public role and the shame of seeming to seek a wider renown through print, between an attachment to congregational principles and an inclusive Calvinism, Crosley shunned theological and ecclesiastical controversies, at least in print, and directed his ministerial energy instead to the proper establishment and administration of the 'Christian' Churches.

### **The builder of Churches**

In 1692, David Crosley was rebaptised in Worcestershire while at the same time seeking Presbyterian ordination and later ministering to the open-communion Church of Tottlebank. This led W. L. Blomfield to coin the term 'Presbyterian Baptist' and to lament this as a '*ne plus ultra* of ecclesiastical confusion'.<sup>36</sup> However, it can be argued that this censoriousness has obscured Crosley's interest in Church government.

To begin with, the importance of denominational labels to contemporaries should not be overestimated. Soon after the Act of Toleration, Crosley and Mitchell were expressly called 'dissenters of ye presbyterian p[er]swasion' when John Hoile of Bacup registered his house in Manchester Court.<sup>37</sup> Late in 1692, the news of Crosley's baptism in Bromsgrove and his preaching without ordination infuriated the Presbyterians but it seems that Crosley himself did not believe his actions were incompatible.<sup>38</sup> In the various property deeds associated with the Rossendale Churches between 1703 and 1712, the terms 'Baptists', 'Independents', 'Congregational' and 'Protestant Dissenters' appear interchangeably, denoting a rather loose conception of Nonconformity in the area, or at the very least some hesitation over the meaning of terms.<sup>39</sup> When a meeting house at Rawdon was built in 1712, the deed simply followed the terms of the Toleration Act and named 'Protestant Dissenters from the Church of England, yet professing a Christian and sincere belief of the doctrinal part of the thirty-nine articles...'<sup>40</sup> Even after Crosley and Mitchell had been rebaptised they did not—or could not—impose their personal views on the Rossendale satellites which only gradually adopted Baptist principles.

In his printed works, Crosley showed his distaste for denominational narrow-mindedness. In his assizes sermon, for instance, he identifies intolerance as one of the main causes of Lawrence Britcliffe's tragic end. A promising, godly young man had married a wife from the Established Church whose 'humour and education' was different from his and who 'ridiculed' his religion, driving him to seek the company of lewd drinkers. Britcliffe was 'unhinged' to the point of suicide, refusing to take food in a misguided attempt to atone for his excessive drinking.<sup>41</sup> As might have been expected, the anecdote is not used by Crosley to warn his listeners about the perils of marrying outside the faith, but to lament a sectarian spirit that tore apart believers who nevertheless agreed on 'the fundamentals of the christian faith': 'What a pity it is, that we cannot allow one another in our private families, the liberty of a different way of thinking'.<sup>42</sup>

Another example can be found in his *Christian Councels*. There, Crosley set out to provide reading guidance 'because, Country People for the most part, are not so well acquainted with, nor such competent Judges of what Books may be most proper'.<sup>43</sup> We find Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists rubbing shoulders with Anglican divines: John Jewel and Isaac Ambrose meet Richard Baxter and Samuel Rutherford, John Bunyan, James Janeway, John Flavel, and Joseph Stennett, the articles and homilies of the Church of England and the Westminster Catechism and Confession of Faith<sup>44</sup>.

Crosley did have a broader sense than most of what could be useful to 'Christians'. His life and works are steeped in Calvinism, rather than sectarianism, carefully avoiding controversies on matters he did not deem essential. In 1690, the young Crosley in London was already admitting that he had conversed with ministers of several denominations, finding much to learn from them all: '& I am daily in Converse with religious persons, chiefly Ministers, But I meet with most of God & truth amongst ye: Independents, Baptists, and here and there a Seeker'.<sup>45</sup> Crosley had been rebaptised and was personally favourable to the sacrament. His

apprenticeship of metropolitan pluralism, however, made him suspicious of imposing anything on the 'consciences' of his rural flocks.

Historians have often drawn a comparison between Mitchell and Crosley to the detriment of the latter: Mitchell, the 'patron Saint' of the northern Baptists, the builder of Churches, the steady and faithful pastor; Crosley, 'the rolling stone', incapable of settling.<sup>46</sup> Such misconceptions are founded on the idea that an interest in Church order, Church building and Church discipline is incompatible with itinerant preaching, a position which neither Crosley nor Mitchell would have recognised. In John Moore's manuscript, there is an undated tract entitled 'A Christian Exhortation to Church-Fellowship by David Crosley to his Christian Auditors' in which Crosley insists on the importance of the right gathering and administration of the Churches, thinking it his duty first to feed his flock the 'sound Doctrine' of faith and justification by Christ alone and second, to 'promote amongst you such a Gospel-Order & Christian Fellowship as may most tend to your furtherance in ye Gospel'.<sup>47</sup> His opinion was therefore sought when there was controversy about the orderly gathering and ecclesiastical organisation of the congregations, and when Mitchell later wrote his own 'Word to all that desire to have Fellowship with God...' he referred to Crosley's 'Christian Exhortation' with the utmost reverence, encouraging his readers to peruse it for it was more 'clear, large & full' than his own treatise.<sup>48</sup>

Early in 1694, Mitchell wrote to Crosley about keeping the Sabbath holy and asking him to procure a copy of Bunyan's work (perhaps *Questions about the Nature and Perpetuity of the Seventh-Day-Sabbath*, published in 1685). He also asked him to answer questions about the administration of the sacraments in the absence of elected Church officers. Mitchell was evidently at a loss to resolve such issues and preferred waiting to hear Crosley's opinion, even though the latter was travelling southwards again. Crosley duly answered in a detailed letter about ruling elders and deacons, the necessity of a proper 'trial' before ordination and the way the gifts of ordinary members should be encouraged. Evidently, Crosley was not content only to preach while he was away; by 1694, he was already a shrewd and respected commentator on ecclesiology.

The same spirit that made him reject partisanship for a broader definition of dissenting principles might have landed David Crosley in some trouble in London where his movements were being scrutinised by members of the Cripplegate congregation and by the powerful London elders. A single example must suffice. Commentators have failed to realize that the ordination of neighbouring London ministers by the laying-on of hands was proposed to Cripplegate by Crosley himself when he was ordained in the presence of Joseph Stennett, John Piggott and Richard Adams. It was a 'method' that he was keen to promote, indeed 'the method proposed by Br Crosley and agreed to by the Elders (viz) Br Adams Br Pigot & Br Stennet in ye ordination of Br Crosley feb 12 [1]702'.<sup>49</sup> Both the Savoy Declaration and the Baptist Confession of 1677 recognised that the ordination of pastors and deacons should be by the laying-on-of-hands of the eldership 'if there be any before constituted therein', but they remain silent on what should be done if that was not the case. In *Jachin & Boaz*, however (written by William Mitchell with a preface by Crosley), Mitchell says that 'holding up of the Hands of the Church' was valid but he immediately adds that 'the Presence, and (so far as it needful and regular) the Assistance of the Elders or Messengers of other Churches is expedient'.<sup>50</sup> In other words, Mitchell, and supposedly Crosley, have it both ways. On the one hand, they insist on the laying-on-of hands by the eldership of the Church, therefore professing an attachment to the autonomy of individual congregations. On the other hand, they encourage the presence of outsiders from other Churches, not necessarily to lay hands but because it was 'expedient' and encouraged communion between neighbouring congregations. Those in Cripplegate opposed to the slightest interference from other congregations in the ordination of the officers, might have seen Crosley's opening gestures as redolent of Presbyterianism.<sup>51</sup>

Far from detecting a rigidity in David Crosley's position, we once more encounter his eagerness to experiment with Church order and discipline and to promote a spirit of communion and reconciliation. Well before his ordination as a minister, Crosley had revealed an original

and inclusive approach that, I have argued, was formed early on in his preaching tours, and that he kept alive and practiced as a minister with an open-mindedness and attention to dissenting interest in general, rather than Baptist interests in particular. His travels in 1690, and again in 1694 before he settled in Tottlebank, offered him an apprenticeship in Church order as much as a forum for his charismatic preaching. He was a vital and largely unrecognised link between the metropolitan and the northern Churches, ready to broaden his experiences of Church life across denominational boundaries and discourse with the variety of Dissenters about Church life.

### **Antinomianism**

Of all the legends surrounding David Crosley none has been more durable than that he was an Antinomian.<sup>52</sup> So it is all the more surprising that no contemporary is known to have applied that term to him. Modern scholars, however, have often chosen to view Crosley in this way. For W. T. Whitley, if Mitchell had fought Antinomianism, Crosley's life was 'a sad illustration' of it'.<sup>53</sup> Joseph Hunter, in the index to his study of the Yorkshire Presbyterian, Oliver Heywood, does not hesitate to label Crosley 'an early Antinomian and Anabaptist in Yorkshire'.<sup>54</sup> Nor were such affirmations confined to nineteenth- or early-twentieth century scholarship. In 1967, for Peter Toon, '[e]xamples of practical antinomianism can be found amongst those who had adopted a Crispian-type theology. David Crossley, the predecessor of John Skepp in London, was excommunicated for drunkenness, immodest behaviour towards women, and an attempt to cover up his offences by the telling of lies...'<sup>55</sup> It is revealing that Toon did not identify any other 'practical' Antinomians, bestowing on Crosley alone the doubtful honour of that title. Even such a thorough historian as Murdina MacDonald, in her magisterial thesis on the London Particular Baptists, believed that Crosley was indeed an 'Antinomian'.<sup>56</sup> I argue that such affirmations were relayed by commentators who used the word 'Antinomian' in a loose sense, basing their judgment simply on the evidence of Crosley's excommunication from Cripplegate. As usual with David Crosley, there is no simple answer.

Antinomianism was linked to certain forms of 'high' or 'hyper' Calvinism by contemporaries and historians alike, although, as Tim Cooper has shown, so-called 'Antinomians' of the seventeenth-century were much more likely to stress their Lutheran heritage.<sup>57</sup> A perfectly orthodox doctrinal position, according to its exponents, Antinomianism emphasised the direct and personal experience of the Spirit, the passivity of the believers in conversion and their inability to merit salvation through their own efforts.<sup>58</sup> This could degenerate—or be seen to degenerate—into a rejection of the moral Law in sanctification, although the Antinomians recognised it was useful to preach the Law to sinners before conversion. Antinomianism therefore disrupted the Reformed balance between justification by faith alone and the importance of good works, and seventeenth-century observers were quick to see its proponents as libertines who preached indulgence in carnal sins with impunity.<sup>59</sup> The distinction between 'doctrinal' Antinomianism and 'practical' Antinomianism was therefore collapsed for polemical purposes. Antinomianism became a serviceable term of polemic that bore little resemblance to the origins of the movement and was sometimes constructed against evidence from the writings of the supposed 'Antinomians' themselves. Antinomians were repeatedly accused of encouraging debauchery, a charge they vigorously denied—to no avail.<sup>60</sup>

In what sense, then, can David Crosley be called an 'Antinomian'? There are indications that Antinomianism (in the sense of a neglect of the Law) was causing a great deal of anxiety among the members of Churches associated with Crosley and Mitchell. Evidence comes once again from the Moore manuscript. An undated letter of Richard Gledhill to the 'Presbyterians', for instance, mentions that the latter accused men like Gledhill and Moore of 'hold[ing] that man may move in all manner of sin & wickedness; & if he can but believe he shall be saved'.<sup>61</sup> Mitchell was ferociously opposed to any hint that he was straying from doctrinal orthodoxy and he regarded the Antinomians as the 'greatest enemies to Christ' who 'live in all ungodliness, wickedness, pride, fleshy pleasures, filthy works & deeds of darkness of wch its even a shame to speak...'<sup>62</sup> In a letter to Laurence Lord, dated 1693, he condemned those who despised the



moral Law in harsh terms : ‘I have had like to have said in my hast all men are Antinomians, to wit, makers void of the Law, Psalm 119.126. But however tho I have & must bear yt brand, yet I intend, through grace, to stick to ye Word of Faith, & ye Moral precept, For where true Faith is it purifies ye heart Acts 15: 4’<sup>63</sup>. As early as 1691, Mitchell had to defend himself against charges of Antinomianism, for he wrote to one Smith on 15 April, ‘Sir, I never held, nor declared that free grace brought Salvation to ye Souls of men, without shewing withall, how it taught to deny ungodliness & worldly lusts, & to live in all godlinesse, righteousness & sobriety’.<sup>64</sup> In the same spirit, when Crosley mentioned his first encounter with Baptists, he was careful to stress that ‘good works’ was a direct consequence of their views on ‘free grace’.<sup>65</sup>

An overlooked piece of writing by Crosley, however, confirms that he was indeed reading Antinomian authors. In his manuscript ‘Christian Exhortation to Church-Fellowship’ mentioned above, Crosley does not wish to appear favourable to innovations in Church government, and he justifies his practice by referring to William Dell:

And ye most of wt I have written I have collected out of Scripture, & this I do on purpose lest any of you should think I am going about to set up some new thing; But if any of you be dissatisfied, Let him consult Mr Dell in his describing of ye Way of true Peace and Unity, especially towards ye latter end thereof...<sup>66</sup>

*The Way of True Peace and Unity* was published in 1649 with a dedication to the House of Commons and to Fairfax. A defense of the autonomy of the congregations, it condemns ecclesiastical uniformity and defends the right of the conscience, while upholding the Church’s powers in matters ecclesiastical, in the choice of officers and in disciplining offenders. Dell is here concerned with the independence of the Churches, the power of the laity—especially prophesying<sup>67</sup>—and the right to follow one’s conscience independently of the magistrate. He warns against the perils of unnecessary wrangling about inessentials.<sup>68</sup> When following an Antinomian author, Crosley therefore endorsed principles of ecclesiastical autonomy and self-rule, a principle of equality between (uneducated) members encouraged to ‘improve’ their gifts and a distrust of schisms and controversies, but certainly not an alleged Antinomian licentiousness.

Evidence of a rejection of the Law is also extremely thin in Crosley’s printed works, for he constantly preached and wrote about ‘election’, ‘free justification’ and ‘perseverance of the saints’ firmly in the context of the performance of good works.<sup>69</sup> For Crosley, good works do not justify, but obedience to the moral Law is a mark of salvation leading to greater assurance of election. Faith in Christ does not bring public, personal, or even civic immunity, ‘or the disappointment will be dreadfull at the hour of death and day of Judgment’.<sup>70</sup> The first advice David Crosley would give to his listeners is ‘to conceive and retain a perfect antipathy to, and an utter abhorrence of, a profane way of living, with the vitious tribe of swearers, filthy talkers, and irreligious sabbath-breakers’.<sup>71</sup> In the opening poem of *The Old Man’s Legacy*, he writes, ‘So that where works are not concomittant/With Faith in Christ, the Author doth grant,/That faith is false, not coming from above’.<sup>72</sup> In 1734, Crosley wrote with evident anger and disgust, ‘Let the loose libertine Preathers then, wherever such be found, for ever stop their Mouths, who turn the Grace of God into wantonness: That either decline, or slight the Doctrine and Practice of good Works’.<sup>73</sup> Bearing in mind that ‘libertines’ and ‘Antinomians’ were often interchangeable in contemporary discourse, such pronouncements are hardly in keeping with Crosley’s supposed ‘practical’ Antinomianism. Examples could be multiplied.

For both Mitchell and Crosley, therefore, ‘Antinomianism’ had nothing to do with denying the power of the moral Law, a point they both firmly reject. Manuscript and printed evidence, however, reveal that they were of the same mind as at least some Antinomians when it came to upholding the power of the individual Churches, and that both of them were likely to emphasise the value of free grace.

There was a good deal of unease about Antinomianism among the dissenting community precisely when *Samson a Type of Christ* was first published. Early in 1690, Samuel Crisp published an augmented edition of his father's sermons, endorsed by highly respectable Congregationalists and Baptists, such as George Cockayne and Hanserd Knollys, reinvigorating a quarrel about the Law and provoking the ire of the ageing Richard Baxter, among others, aware that it could endanger the planned 'Happy Union' between Presbyterians and Congregationalists. But Antinomianism was not confined to doctrinal disputes, as the case of William Dell above demonstrates. The Welsh Congregationalist, Richard Davis, from Rothwell, was accused of being an Antinomian when he sent preachers who were kindred spirits to proselytize in other ministers' territories and defended Congregational principles.<sup>74</sup> Davis, for instance, refused the presence of Presbyterians at the ordination of ministers, a practice recommended by the *Heads of Agreement* which had cemented the short-lived 'Happy Union' between the two denominations. Hyper Calvinism was coupled with a strong insistence on the autonomy of each congregation.

In 1691, however, London ministers did not seem to have recognised in Crosley a northern cousin of Davis. Inviting a young, virtually unknown, itinerant preacher to London in the summer of 1691 would have been a strange move for the likes of Pomfret and Strudwick, united in such a fragile union at the height of the Antinomian controversy, without checking his doctrinal—or practical—credentials first. Inviting the same preacher to Bedford would have been even more incongruous. It has been overlooked that Ebenezer Chandler, the successor of John Bunyan to the Bedford pastorate, was one of the movers against Richard Davis in Northamptonshire. It is therefore very unlikely that he would have allowed Crosley to address his own congregation in 1692 had rumours of 'Antinomianism', in any sense, been raised against him, as it was against the Welsh preacher.

If the early *Samson* (1691) is read alone, it can indeed be said to magnify the justification by faith only, to the detriment of the value of good works. If the *Triumph of Sovereign Grace* (1744) is read alone, however, with its careful insistence on reading the Scriptures, praying, keeping the Sabbath holy, performing acts of charity, and loving one's neighbour, then we may sense we are being presented with precisely the opposite view. This does not necessarily mean, however, that Crosley's position had shifted or that he moved away from hyper Calvinism towards the end of his career. Crosley was a preacher who, like all preachers, adapted to a variety of situations and to a variety of listeners. Metropolitan Presbyterians simply demanded something different from the Bacup friends and relatives of a Lancashire rake. Without underestimating doctrinal evolution in the course of a life, it is nevertheless difficult to ascertain, from Crosley's printed works alone, that he mellowed or compromised his position.

### ***Jachin & Boaz***

A final point needs to be made. For W. T. Whitley, *Jachin & Boaz*, Mitchell's 1707 confession of faith and platform of discipline endorsed by Crosley, exhibits a 'very high Calvinism'.<sup>75</sup> This is a point reiterated by David Glass, for whom the work displays a 'rigid hypercalvinism'.<sup>76</sup> High Calvinists like John Skepp, Crosley's successor in Cripplegate, had long been suspicious of the Westminster Assembly's Confession, pronouncing its teaching not Calvinistic but Arminian. We might assume that if Mitchell and Crosley were to be labelled 'high' Calvinists then they would also have distanced themselves from the Assembly's teachings.

Nothing could be further from the truth. It has never been acknowledged that *Jachin & Boaz* is by no means an original work but, for the most part, a mere copy of the Savoy Declaration that was published by the Congregationalists in 1659, itself a reworking of the Westminster Confession of 1647. Mitchell does expand sections on the respective duties of ministers and lay members but departs from the Savoy Declaration only concerning the mode of administration of baptism. He also omits the last section about the lawfulness of occasional communion with other 'less pure' Churches.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, Crosley, in his preface, mentions that the article on 'Free Will' was taken from 'the excellent [Stephen] Charnock'<sup>78</sup>, although this is

only true of the second half of the paragraph stating that no man can be forced to believe against his reason. These adjustments aside, it is essential to recognise that Mitchell was careful to be remembered, in his 'Dying Legacy', as one who held Congregational principles on matters of discipline.

Crosley and Mitchell might both have been Baptist by the mid-1690s and yet, when the standard Baptist confession of 1677 (republished in 1689) departs from the Savoy Declaration, Mitchell systematically follows the latter. The 1677 Confession does not separate articles of faith from a platform of discipline, which is simply incorporated into its extended article 'Of the Church'.<sup>79</sup> Both the Savoy Declaration and Mitchell's section entitled 'Concerning discipline' are therefore longer and more detailed than the 1677 Confession. Mitchell follows the Congregationalists, but not the Baptists, on four main points: (1) the explicit mention of a confession of faith for all membership candidates, 'wrought in them by the power of God, declared by themselves or other wise made known', (2) the distinctions between pastors, teachers, elders and deacons as Church officers (the 1677 Confession mentions 'Bishops or Elders and Deacons' only), (3) an article about the parochial duty of ministers, and (4) the mention of synods and councils where the Baptists simply recognised 'meetings' of messengers.<sup>80</sup>

Letters exchanged between Mitchell and Crosley in the mid-1690s reveal the amount of opposition in Rossendale to Crosley's adoption of Baptist principles. There is no such direct information for Mitchell, although he states that he has been 'much abused...both by Friends and Enemies about what I hold, and have a considerable time maintained concerning visible particular Churches or Christian Societies'.<sup>81</sup> By the time Crosley oversaw the publication of *Jachin & Boaz* it was therefore still important to avoid antagonising those Churches that had not yet become fully Baptist, in order to show that, in matters of doctrine and discipline, both cousins had adhered to a mild form of Congregationalism, and had done so up to the point of recognising (even if it were now a thing of the Cromwellian past) that ministers could be maintained by the state and address the spiritual needs of 'others living within their bounds', alongside members of a separate congregation.<sup>82</sup> Those two men, at least on the question of Church government, were therefore no more 'very high Calvinists' than their Congregational counterparts or, indeed, the divines of the Westminster Assembly themselves.

## Conclusion

David Crosley's career cannot leave even the most objective historian impartial. Hated and shamed as a drunk, a liar, and an adulterer, always putting his interests first, everything about him suggested double standards, if not downright hypocrisy and blatant contradiction. For three hundred years, his character has been misinterpreted, if not vilified, partly because of eighteen fateful months, in London, when Crosley, in mid-career, had to flee the metropolis facing charges of immorality.

The preceding remarks have attempted to refocus the critical debate on three main points. First, and in contradiction to the sulphurous image we still have of his life and works, I have suggested that Crosley was actually a cautious, even a timid, self-publicist who persistently avoided controversies in print, which explains why he has not left as extensive a legacy of writings as his more prolific colleagues with a taste for polemic. Second, there was an apparent tension between Crosley's attachment to the independence of each congregation and his desire to develop a network of Churches and collaboration between ministers. He seems to have adopted several positions at various points in his career. He strongly supported a 'method' of ordination by neighbouring elders in 1702 while a minister in Cripplegate, aware of the necessary cooperation of the London elders. On the other hand, he more than once ignored other ministers' precedence, and sense of territory in the North, when it came to build or strengthen his own network of followers.

Second, Crosley's alleged Antinomianism should be regarded as a defence of congregational autonomy, coupled with frequent preaching on free grace and an insistence on the power of the Spirit, but never as an endorsement of moral laxity. In that sense, calling him a 'practical' Antinomian is plainly wrong. Even at the height of the Cripplegate scandal, when his flock turned against him in the strongest possible way, never once was it said – at least in the Cripplegate Church book where all the proceedings were carefully recorded – that Crosley was an 'Antinomian'.

Finally, we should be wary of accepting, without qualification the view that Crosley was a champion of Baptist principles. He personally favoured adult baptism as an entering ordinance and yet he seems to have kept discussion alive with different denominations and was reluctant to impose his views on those of different opinions. If *Jachin & Boaz* is to be read as a spiritual legacy for the Mitchell-Crosley partnership, then we should recognise that it was neither 'hyper-Calvinist' nor Baptist but rather Congregationalist.

David Crosley was neither a firebrand Antinomian nor a rigid Baptist. If he never compromised when preaching Christ's grace, or when upholding the power of the congregations (and the power of the ordinary members within them), he may best be qualified as a Protestant dissenter whose spirit of accommodation and tolerance, whatever the rumours some of his contemporaries were prepared to spread, was second to none but whose idea of dissenting unity was above many.

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<sup>2</sup> Letter of John Marshall of Rawdon to George Braithwaite (17 January 1736), quoted in W.L. Blomfield, 'Yorkshire Baptist Churches in the 17th and 18th Centuries', in C.E. Shipley (ed.), *The Baptists of Yorkshire* (Bradford and London: William Byles & Sons and Kingsgate Press, 1912), pp. 53-112 (at p. 87) and in W. T. Whitley, *The Baptists of North-West England, 1649-1913* (London: The Kingsgate Press; Preston: Toulmin & Sons, 1913), pp. 94-6. For a letter of thanks from one David Gray to David Crosley, see John Moore, 'The Copies of Some Christian Letters, Written Originally by severall hands, upon divers Occasions', William Farrer Collection MS L1/43, Greater Manchester County Record Office, n. fol. Thereafter Notebook. Letters to and from Crosley are quoted directly from the manuscript rather than from Frederick Overend's selection of seventeen letters, whose transcription is at times faulty; see Frederick Overend, *History of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Bacup* (London: Kingsgate Press, 1912).

<sup>3</sup> Overend, *History of the Ebenezer Baptist Church*, p. 136; Evan R. Lewis, *History of the Bethesda Baptist Church, Barnoldswick, Yorks* (Cwmavon: L. L. Griffiths, 1893), p. 4; Blomfield, 'Yorkshire Baptist Churches', p. 78, H. Wheeler Robinson, 'The Value of Denominational History', *Baptist Quarterly* 2 (1924-1925), pp. 100-112 (at p. 111); Peter Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity, 1689-1765* (London: The Olive Tree, 1967), 152n.

<sup>4</sup> Blomfield, 'Yorkshire Baptist Churches', p. 73.

<sup>5</sup> Bromsgrove Baptist Church, volume 1, 1670-1715, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, Oxford. fol. 61. See Raymond Brown, *The English Baptists of the Eighteenth Century* (The Baptist Historical Society, 1986), p. 40.

<sup>6</sup> Notebook n. fol.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See Whitley, *Baptists of North-West England*, pp. 77-80 and 'the great and manyfould inconveniences disadvantages and distractions' in which Crosley's departure was supposed to result. Mitchell first mentioned his dealings with Tottlebank in a letter to John Moore, dated 9 October 1693, 'I have had a man at me from beyond Cartmel-sands, since I saw thee, to intreat me to come over & help them, they being in great want of a Minister' (probably Colonel Roger Sawdrey of Broughton Tower) and again on 4 January 1694, 'a man 3 or 4 times from beyond Sands, with a Letter from ye old Gent: Ro: Sawrey'.

<sup>11</sup> Tottlebank Church Book (1669-1854), Angus Library, Regent's Park College, Oxford, fol. 25.

<sup>12</sup> 'Cripplegate (Curriers Hall) Church Book, 1689-1723', Angus Library and Archive, Regent's Park College, FPC E1, fol. 36r. On this episode, see Anne Dunan-Page, 'Letters and records of the dissenting congregations: David Crosley, Cripplegate and Baptist Church life', in Anne Dunan-Page and Clotilde Prunier (eds), *Debating the Faith: Religion and Letter Writing in Britain, 1500-1800*, International Archives of the History of Ideas (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013), p. 69-87.

<sup>13</sup> See W. T. Whitley, *Baptists of North-West England*, p. 95.

<sup>14</sup> The main sources of information on Crosley's life are: Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, 4 vols (London, 1811-1830), vol. 3; David Douglas, *History of the Baptist Churches in the North of England from 1648 to*

1845 (London, 1846); Abel Jones Parry, *History of the Cloughfold Baptist Church From 1675 to 1875* (Manchester, 1875); Thomas Newbigging, *History of the Forest of Rossendale*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Rawtenstall, 1893); W.L. Blomfield, 'Yorkshire Baptist Churches', pp. 53-112; David Glass, 'Baptist Beginnings in the West Ridings', *Baptist Quarterly* 3 (1926-1927), pp. 178-83. Among modern commentators one can cite, James S. Hardman, 'David Crosley, the Pioneer Rossendale Baptist', in *Four Articles by James S. Hardman*, published for the Sion Baptist Church (Cloughfold, 1947), 3-13; Ian Sellers (ed.), *Our Heritage: The Baptists of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire, 1647-1987* (Leeds: The Yorkshire Baptist Association and the Lancashire and Cheshire Baptist Association, 1987); B.A. Ramsbottom, *The Puritan Samson: The Life of David Crosley, 1669-1744* (Harpending: Gospel Standard Trust, 1991); S.L. Copson, *Association Life of the Particular Baptists of Norther England, 1699-1732*, English Baptist Records 3 (Baptist Historical Society, 1991); M.F. Thomas, *Tottlebank Baptist Church, 1669-1699* (1999, privately printed); J. H. Y. Briggs, 'Crosley, David (1669/70-1744)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6790>, accessed 28 April 2011].

<sup>15</sup> See 'A short Poem on ye Death of ye first-born Son of John Moore. By D.C.', Notebook, n. fol.

<sup>16</sup> *Samson a Type of Christ*, 1744 edn (Newburyport, 1796), p. v.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. iii.

<sup>18</sup> On the trope of the mystical marriage in Baptist literature, see Elizabeth Clarke, "'The Glorious Lover': Baptist Literature and the Bride of Christ", *Baptist Quarterly* 43 (2010), pp. 452-72.

<sup>19</sup> *Samson* (1796), p. v.

<sup>20</sup> *Samson* (1691), A2v.

<sup>21</sup> *Samson* (1796), p. vi.

<sup>22</sup> 'William Michill's "'Jachin & Boaz"' 1707', ed. W.E. Blomfield, *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society* 3 (1912-1913), pp. 64-88, 154-75 (at p. 67).

<sup>23</sup> *Christian Counsels*, K1r.

<sup>24</sup> David Crosley, *The Triumph of Sovereign Grace* (London, 1743), p. 119.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>26</sup> See for instance, *Samson* (1796), pp. v-vi, *Christian Counsels*, p. 75.

<sup>27</sup> *Samson* (1691), A2v.

<sup>28</sup> *Samson* (1796), p. v.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. v-vi.

<sup>30</sup> *Christian Counsels*, pp. 74-5.

<sup>31</sup> David Crosley, *The Christian Marriage Explained* (London, 1744), F2r.

<sup>32</sup> *Triumph of Sovereign Grace*, p. 71.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xx.

<sup>34</sup> James Hargreaves, *The Life and Memoir of the Late Reverend John Hirst, Forty Two Years Pastor of the Baptist Church at Bacup: Also an Appendix* (Rochdale, 1816), quoted p. 328.

<sup>35</sup> *Christian Counsels*, K1v.

<sup>36</sup> Blomfield, 'Yorkshire Baptist Churches', p. 80.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted in Whitley, *Baptists of North-West England*, p. 75.

<sup>38</sup> See a letter from the notebook of Thomas Jolly, transcribed by Overend, p. 69.

<sup>39</sup> Blomfield, 'Yorkshire Baptist Churches', p. 83.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Triumph of Sovereign Grace*, pp. 54 and ff.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56-7.

<sup>43</sup> *Christian Counsels*, p. 78.

<sup>44</sup> John Jewel (1522-1571) was bishop of Salisbury, Isaac Ambrose (*bap.* 1604-*d.* 1664), Samuel Rutherford (*c.* 1600-1661), Richard Baxter (1615-1691), James Janeway (1636-1674) and John Flavell (*bap.* 1630-*d.* 1691) were Presbyterian ministers, John Bunyan (1628-1688) can be best described as a Congregationalist or open-communion Baptist and Joseph Stennett (1663-1713) was a Seventh-Day Baptist. All have entries in *ODNB*.

<sup>45</sup> Notebook, n. fol. Frederick Overend unfortunately transcribed 'Quakers' for 'Seekers'.

<sup>46</sup> Blomfield, 'Yorkshire Baptist Churches', p. 86, Roger Hayden, *English Baptist History and Heritage*, published for the Baptist Union of Great Britain (Chipping Norton: Nigel Lynn, 2005), p. 102. 'Rolling stone' is the expression of B. A. Ramsbottom, *The Puritan Samson*, p. 3, while an 'erratic' disposition appears with remarkable frequency in accounts of Crosley's career: in Ramsbottom, p. 2, David Glass, 'Baptist Beginning', p. 180, Blomfield, 'Yorkshire Baptist Churches', p. 78.

<sup>47</sup> Notebook, n. fol.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Cripplegate Church book, fol. 38r.

<sup>50</sup> *Jachin & Boaz*, p. 167.

<sup>51</sup> See for instance the correspondence between Cripplegate and Thomas Sadler, writing from Charlottetown, Carolina, after Crosley's excommunication, Cripplegate Church Book, fol. 51v-52r, 54v. On this question, see Murdina D. MacDonald, 'London Calvinistic Baptists 1689-1729: Tensions within a Community Under Toleration', unpublished D.Phil thesis, University of Oxford (1982), pp. 165-6.

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- <sup>52</sup> See Peter Naylor, *Picking up a Pin for the Lord. English Particular Baptists from 1688 to the Early Nineteenth Century* (London: Grace Publications, 1992), pp. 145-64.
- <sup>53</sup> Whitley, *Baptists of North-West England*, p. 109.
- <sup>54</sup> Joseph Hunter, *The Rise of Old Dissent, Exemplified in the Life of Oliver Heywood* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans), p. 281.
- <sup>55</sup> Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 152n.
- <sup>56</sup> MacDonald, 'London Calvinistic Baptists', p. 119.
- <sup>57</sup> Tim Cooper, *Fear and Polemic in Seventeenth-Century England: Richard Baxter and Antinomianism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), p. 35.
- <sup>58</sup> For an overview of Antinomian controversies in the seventeenth century, *Ibid.*, pp. 15-45.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15-21.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.
- <sup>61</sup> Notebook, fol. 8
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, n. fol.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>67</sup> William Dell, *The Way of True Peace and Unity among the Faithful and Churches of Christ* (London, 1649), pp. 104-108.
- <sup>68</sup> For accusation of Socinianism against Dell, see Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution. The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge : cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 170-71.
- <sup>69</sup> See for instance his advice about hearing 'the best preachers' in *Christian Councels*, p. 81.
- <sup>70</sup> *Triumph of Sovereign Grace*, p. xxi.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.
- <sup>72</sup> *The Old Man's Legacy*, A2v.
- <sup>73</sup> *Christian Councels*, p. 87.
- <sup>74</sup> See J. Hay Colligan, 'The Antinomian Controversy', *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society* 6 (1915): 389-96; Geoffrey Nuttall, 'Northamptonshire and *The Modern Question*: A Turning-Point in Eighteenth-Century Dissent', *Journal of Theological Studies* 16 (1965), pp. 101-23, Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (1978; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), pp. 292-97, Cooper, *Fear and Polemic*, pp. 170-91, Roger Thomas, 'The Break-Up of Nonconformity', in Geoffrey N. Nuttall et al (eds), *The Beginnings of Nonconformity*, The Hibbert Lectures 1962 (London: J. Clarke, 1964), pp. 33-60.
- <sup>75</sup> Whitley, *Baptists of North-West England*, p. 89.
- <sup>76</sup> Glass, 'Baptist Beginnings', p. 181.
- <sup>77</sup> 'Of the Institution of Churches, and the Order Appointed in them by Jesus Christ', Art. XXX, 'A Declaration of the Faith and Order Owned and Practiced in the Congregational Churches in England (1658)', ed. Williston Walker, *The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism*, rvd edn, introd. Elizabeth C. Nordbeck (1893; New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1991), p. 408.
- <sup>78</sup> *Jachin & Boaz*, p. 70.
- <sup>79</sup> 'The Second London Confession', *Baptist Confession of Faith*, ed. William L. Lumpkin (Chicago, Philadelphia and Los Angeles: The Judson Press, 1959), pp. 285-89.
- <sup>80</sup> *Jachin & Boaz*, pp. 165, 166, 168, 172-3.
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163.
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168.